

**PLEA AGREEMENT ROUTING SLIP**

**USAO NO:**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**From:** Robert W. Wiechering  
**AUSA/SAUSA**

**Defendant:** Michael M. Sears

**Case No:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date Plea Scheduled:**

☐ Pre-Indictment Plea ☐ Post-Indictment Plea

**1. Optional Sentences or Paragraphs Deleted:**

☐ Detention ☐ Forfeiture  
☐ Substantial Assistance ☐ Cooperation  
☐ Immigration ☐ Tax Language  
☐ No Other Conditions

**2. Modifications or Additions**

Page No. Paragraph No.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**3. Is Restitution Applicable:**

☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, are victims fully and correctly identified and the amount due each stated within plea agreement: ☐ Yes ☐ No

**4. Defendant has agreed to plead guilty to the most serious, readily provable offense.**

☐ YES ☐ NO

**5. Defendant has agreed to plead guilty to a readily provable gun count.**

☐ Not Applicable, the defendant did not use, carry or possess a firearm  
☐ YES ☐ NO

**6. Stipulation(s) have been reached regarding the following guideline factors.**

(Check those that apply):

☐ Drug quantity ☐ Gun  
☐ Role ☐ Acceptance  
☐ Safety Valve ☐ Loss  
☐ Other (list): \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Stipulated guideline factors are the most serious, readily provable guideline factors applicable to the defendant's conduct.**

☐ YES ☐ NO

**8. An agreement not to file an information regarding prior convictions has been reached.**

☐ Not Applicable ☐ YES ☐ NO

**9. Victim Financial Information Memo completed.**

☐ YES ☐ NO

**10. Defendant Financial Information Memo completed.**

☐ YES ☐ NO

**(Reminder: E-mail your final statement of facts to Sam Dibbley once the plea has been taken before the Judge)**

**PLEA AGREEMENT APPROVAL**

**To:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Unit Supervisor**

**Approved:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**To: Robert A. Spencer**  
**Chief, Criminal Division**  
**or Kevin V. Di Gregory**  
**Deputy Chief, Criminal Division**

[For Acts of Terrorism, National Security, RICO, Corporate Fraud, Public Corruption, Homicide, or Special Public or Agency Interest]

**Approved:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

Alexandria Division

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	)	
	)	
v.	)	CRIMINAL NO. 04-310-A
	)	
MICHAEL M. SEARS,	)	
	)	
Defendant.	)	

PLEA AGREEMENT

Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, Robert W. Wiechering, Assistant United States Attorney, the defendant, Michael M. Sears, and the defendant's counsel have entered into an agreement pursuant to Rule 11 of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure. The terms of the agreement are as follows:

**1. Offense and Maximum Penalties**

The defendant agrees to waive indictment and plead guilty to a single count criminal information charging the defendant with Aiding and Abetting Acts Affecting a Personal Financial Interest, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 208(a) and 216(a)(2) and 2. The maximum penalties for this offense are a term of five years of imprisonment, a fine of \$250,000, full restitution, a special assessment, and three years of supervised release. The defendant understands that this supervised release term is in addition to any prison term the defendant may receive, and that a violation of a term of supervised release could result in the defendant being returned to prison for the full term of supervised release.

## **2. Factual Basis for the Plea**

The defendant will plead guilty because the defendant is in fact guilty of the charged offense. The defendant admits the facts set forth in the statement of facts filed with this plea agreement and agrees that those facts establish guilt of the offense charged beyond a reasonable doubt. The statement of facts, which is hereby incorporated into this plea agreement, constitutes a stipulation of facts for purposes of Section 1B1.2(a) of the Sentencing Guidelines.

## **3. Assistance and Advice of Counsel**

The defendant is satisfied that the defendant's attorney has rendered effective assistance. The defendant understands that by entering into this agreement, defendant surrenders certain rights as provided in this agreement. The defendant understands that the rights of criminal defendants include the following:

- a. the right to plead not guilty and to persist in that plea;
- b. the right to a jury trial;
- c. the right to be represented by counsel – and if necessary have the court appoint counsel – at trial and at every other stage of the proceedings; and
- d. the right at trial to confront and cross-examine adverse witnesses, to be protected from compelled self-incrimination, to testify and present evidence, and to compel the attendance of witnesses.

## **4. Waiver of Right to Jury Trial on Sentencing Factors**

The defendant, by entering this plea, also waives the right to have facts that determine the offense level under the Sentencing Guidelines (including facts that support any specific offense characteristic or other enhancement or adjustment) (1) charged in the information, (2) proven to a

jury, or (3) proven beyond a reasonable doubt. The defendant explicitly consents to be sentenced pursuant to the applicable Sentencing Guidelines, to have the sentence based on facts to be established by a preponderance of the evidence before the sentencing judge, and to allow the court to consider any reliable evidence without regard to its admissibility at trial. The defendant explicitly acknowledges that his plea to the charged offense authorizes the Court to impose any sentence that is authorized by the Sentencing Guidelines up to and including the maximum sentence set forth in the United States Code. The defendant also waives all challenges to the constitutionality of the Sentencing Guidelines.

#### **5. Role of the Court and the Probation Office**

The defendant understands that the Court has jurisdiction and authority to impose any sentence within the statutory maximum described above but that the Court will determine the defendant's actual sentence in accordance with the Sentencing Guidelines and Policy Statements. The defendant understands that the Court has not yet determined a sentence and that any estimate of the probable sentencing range under the sentencing guidelines the defendant may have received from the defendant's counsel, the United States, or the Probation Office, is a prediction, not a promise, and is not binding on the United States, the Probation Office, or the Court. The United States makes no promise or representation concerning what sentence the defendant will receive, and the defendant cannot withdraw a guilty plea based upon the actual sentence. Notwithstanding the foregoing, for purposes of applying the guidelines, promulgated by the United States Sentencing Commission pursuant to Title 28, United States Code, Section 994, the parties agree on the following points:

- a. The base offense level for the offense of conviction pursuant to Guideline § 2C1.3 is level 6.
- b. The government reserves the right to argue the offense involved actual or planned harm to the government warranting a 4 level increase under the provisions of § 2C1.3(b)(1). The defendant reserves the right to oppose such an increase.
- c. Should the U.S. Probation Office determine that the defendant has accepted responsibility, then pursuant to § 3E.1 a 2-level decrease is applicable because the defendant has demonstrated acceptance of responsibility for his offense.
- d. Based on the information currently available to the government, defendant has no prior convictions, and his criminal history category is I; and
- e. The parties agree that there exists no aggravating or mitigating circumstances of a kind, or to a degree, not adequately taken into consideration by the Sentencing Commission in formulating the Guidelines that should result in a sentence different from the range determined by the court.
- f. The parties agree that the facts set forth in the Statement of Facts and as otherwise known to the government do not warrant a two level increase for obstruction of justice under the provisions of 3C1.1 of the Guidelines.
- g. The defendant and his attorney and the government acknowledge that the above calculations are preliminary in nature and based on facts known to the government as of the time of this Agreement. The defendant understands that

the Probation Department will conduct its own investigation and that the Court ultimately determines the facts and law relevant to sentencing, and that the Court's determinations govern the final Sentencing Guidelines calculation. Accordingly, the validity of this Agreement is not contingent upon the probation officer's or the Court's concurrence with the above calculations.

#### **6. Waiver of Appeal and Review**

The defendant also understands that Title 18, United States Code, Section 3742 affords a defendant the right to appeal the sentence imposed. Nonetheless, the defendant knowingly waives the right to appeal the conviction and any sentence within the maximum provided in the statute of conviction (or the manner in which that sentence was determined) on the grounds set forth in Title 18, United States Code, Section 3742 or on any ground whatsoever, in exchange for the concessions made by the United States in this plea agreement. This agreement does not affect the rights or obligations of the United States as set forth in Title 18, United States Code, Section 3742(b). The defendant also hereby waives all rights, whether asserted directly or by a representative, to request or receive from any department or agency of the United States any records pertaining to the investigation or prosecution of this case, including without limitation any records that may be sought under the Freedom of Information Act, Title 5, United States Code, Section 552, or the Privacy Act, Title 5, United States Code, Section 552a.

#### **7. Special Assessment**

Before sentencing in this case, the defendant agrees to pay a mandatory special assessment of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) per count of conviction.

## **8. Payment of Monetary Penalties**

The defendant understands and agrees that, pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Sections 3613, whatever monetary penalties are imposed by the Court will be due and payable immediately and subject to immediate enforcement by the United States as provided for in Section 3613. Furthermore, the defendant agrees to provide all of his financial information to the United States and the Probation Office and, if requested, to participate in a pre-sentencing debtor's examination. If the Court imposes a schedule of payments, the defendant understands that the schedule of payments is merely a minimum schedule of payments and not the only method, nor a limitation on the methods, available to the United States to enforce the judgment. If the defendant is incarcerated, the defendant agrees to participate in the Bureau of Prisons' Inmate Financial Responsibility Program, regardless of whether the Court specifically directs participation or imposes a schedule of payments.

**9.** The United States will not further criminally prosecute the defendant in the Eastern District of Virginia for the specific conduct described in the Information or Statement of Facts or any other specific allegations which were the subject of this office's investigation of the defendant.

## **10. Defendant's Cooperation**

The defendant agrees to cooperate fully and truthfully with the United States, and provide all information known to the defendant regarding any criminal activity as requested by the government. In that regard:

- a. The defendant agrees to testify truthfully and completely at any grand juries, trials or other proceedings.
- b. The defendant agrees to be reasonably available for debriefing and pre-trial conferences as the United States may require.

- c. The defendant agrees to provide all documents, records, writings, or materials of any kind in the defendant's possession or under the defendant's care, custody, or control relating directly or indirectly to all areas of inquiry and investigation.
- d. The defendant agrees that, upon request by the United States, the defendant will voluntarily submit to polygraph examinations to be conducted by a polygraph examiner of the United States' choice.
- e. The defendant agrees that the Statement of Facts is limited to information to support the plea. The defendant will provide more detailed facts relating to this case during ensuing debriefings.
- f. The defendant is hereby on notice that the defendant may not violate any federal, state, or local criminal law while cooperating with the government, and that the government will, in its discretion, consider any such violation in evaluating whether to file a motion for a downward departure or reduction of sentence.
- g. Nothing in this agreement places any obligation on the government to seek the defendant's cooperation or assistance.

#### **11. Use of Information Provided by the Defendant Under This Agreement**

Pursuant to Section 1B1.8 of the Sentencing Guidelines, no truthful information that the defendant provides pursuant to this agreement will be used to enhance the defendant's guidelines range. The United States will bring this plea agreement and the full extent of the defendant's cooperation to the attention of other prosecuting offices if requested. Nothing in this plea agreement,



however, restricts the Court's or Probation Office's access to information and records in the possession of the United States. Furthermore, nothing in this agreement prevents the government in any way from prosecuting the defendant should the defendant provide false, untruthful, or perjurious information or testimony or from using information provided by the defendant in furtherance of any forfeiture action, whether criminal or civil, administrative or judicial.

**12. Defendant Must Provide Full, Complete and Truthful Cooperation**

This plea agreement is not conditioned upon charges being brought against any other individual. This plea agreement is not conditioned upon any outcome in any pending investigation. This plea agreement is not conditioned upon any result in any future prosecution which may occur because of the defendant's cooperation. This plea agreement is not conditioned upon any result in any future grand jury presentation or trial involving charges resulting from this investigation. This plea agreement is conditioned upon the defendant providing full, complete and truthful cooperation.

**13. Motion for a Downward Departure**

The parties agree that the United States reserves the right to seek any departure from the applicable sentencing guidelines, pursuant to Section 5K1.1 of the Sentencing Guidelines and Policy Statements, or any reduction of sentence pursuant to Rule 35(b) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, if, in its sole discretion, the United States determines that such a departure or reduction of sentence is appropriate.

**14. Breach of the Plea Agreement and Remedies**

This agreement is effective when signed by the defendant, the defendant's attorney, and an attorney for the United States. The defendant agrees to entry of this plea agreement at the date and time scheduled with the Court by the United States (in consultation with the defendant's attorney).

If the defendant withdraws from this agreement, or commits or attempts to commit any additional federal, state or local crimes, or intentionally gives materially false, incomplete, or misleading testimony or information, or otherwise violates any provision of this agreement, then:

- a. The United States will be released from its obligations under this agreement, including any obligation to seek a downward departure or a reduction in sentence. The defendant, however, may not withdraw the guilty plea entered pursuant to this agreement;
- b. The defendant will be subject to prosecution for any federal criminal violation, including, but not limited to, perjury and obstruction of justice, that is not time-barred by the applicable statute of limitations on the date this agreement is signed. Notwithstanding the subsequent expiration of the statute of limitations, in any such prosecution, the defendant agrees to waive any statute-of-limitations defense; and
- c. Any prosecution, including the prosecution that is the subject of this agreement, may be premised upon any information provided, or statements made, by the defendant, and all such information, statements, and leads derived therefrom may be used against the defendant. The defendant waives any right to claim that statements made before or after the date of this agreement, including the statement of facts accompanying this agreement or adopted by the defendant and any other statements made pursuant to this or any other agreement with the United States, should be excluded or suppressed

under Fed. R. Evid. 410, Fed. R. Crim. P. 11(f), the Sentencing Guidelines or any other provision of the Constitution or federal law.

Any alleged breach of this agreement by either party shall be determined by the Court in an appropriate proceeding at which the defendant's disclosures and documentary evidence shall be admissible and at which the moving party shall be required to establish a breach of the plea agreement by a preponderance of the evidence. The proceeding established by this paragraph does not apply, however, to the decision of the United States whether to file a motion based on "substantial assistance" as that phrase is used in Rule 35(b) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure and Section 5K1.1 of the Sentencing Guidelines and Policy Statements. The defendant agrees that the decision whether to file such a motion rests in the sole discretion of the United States.

**15. Nature of the Agreement and Modifications**

This written agreement constitutes the complete plea agreement between the United States, the defendant, and the defendant's counsel. The defendant and his attorney acknowledge that no threats, promises, or representations have been made, nor agreements reached, other than those set forth in writing in this plea agreement, to cause the defendant to plead guilty. Any modification of this plea agreement shall be valid only as set forth in writing in a supplemental or revised plea agreement signed by all parties.

Paul J. McNulty  
United States Attorney

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Robert W. Wiechering  
Assistant United States Attorney

APPROVED:

Date of Approval:

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Approving Supervisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Defendant's Signature: I hereby agree that I have consulted with my attorney and fully understand all rights with respect to the pending criminal information. Further, I fully understand all rights with respect to the provisions of the Sentencing Guidelines and Policy Statements which may apply in my case. I have read this plea agreement and carefully reviewed every part of it with my attorney. I understand this agreement and voluntarily agree to it.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Defendant

Defense Counsel Signature: I am counsel for the defendant in this case. I have fully explained to the defendant the defendant's rights with respect to the pending information. Further, I have reviewed the provisions of the Sentencing Guidelines and Policy Statements and I have fully explained to the defendant the provisions of those Guidelines which may apply in this case. I have carefully reviewed every part of this plea agreement with the defendant. To my knowledge, the defendant's decision to enter into this agreement is an informed and voluntary one.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Counsel for the Defendant

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
Statement of Special Assessment Account

This statement reflects your special assessment only. There may be other penalties imposed at sentencing.

ACCOUNT INFORMATION	
CRIM. ACTION NO.:	
DEFENDANT'S NAME:	
PAY THIS AMOUNT:	

INSTRUCTIONS:

1.     **MAKE CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO:**  
          *CLERK, U.S. DISTRICT COURT*
2.     **PAYMENT MUST REACH THE CLERK'S OFFICE BEFORE YOUR SENTENCING DATE**
3.     **PAYMENT SHOULD BE SENT TO:**

	In person (9 AM to 4 PM)	By mail:
Alexandria cases:	Clerk, U.S. District Court 401 Courthouse Square Alexandria, VA 22314	
Richmond cases:	Clerk, U.S. District Court 1000 E. Main Street, #307 Richmond, VA 23219	
Newport News cases:	Clerk, U.S. District Court 101 - 25 <sup>th</sup> Street, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor Newport News, VA 23607	Clerk, U.S. District Court P. O. Box 494 Newport News, VA 23607
Norfolk cases:	Clerk, U.S. District Court 600 Granby Street Norfolk, VA 23510	

4.     **INCLUDE DEFENDANT'S NAME ON CHECK OR MONEY ORDER**
5.     **ENCLOSE THIS COUPON TO INSURE PROPER and PROMPT APPLICATION OF PAYMENT**

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

Alexandria Division

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	)	
	)	
v.	)	CRIMINAL NO.
	)	
MICHAEL M. SEARS	)	

**WAIVER OF INDICTMENT**

I, Michael M. Sears, the above named defendant, accused of Aiding and Abetting Acts Affecting a Personal Financial Interest in violation of Title 18, United States Code Section 208(a) and 216(a)(2) and 2, being advised of the nature of the charge, the proposed information, and of my rights, hereby waive in open court prosecution by indictment and consent that the proceeding may be by information rather than by indictment.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Michael M. Sears  
Defendant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Counsel for Defendant

Before: \_\_\_\_\_  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE